

*SHEPHERD SCHOOL  
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA*

*LARRY RACHLEFF, music director*

*SERGIU LUCA, violin*

*Thursday, December 3, 2009*

*8:00 p.m.*

*Stude Concert Hall*

RICE UNIVERSITY

the  
Shepherd  
School  
of Music

## PROGRAM

**Overture to "The Abduction  
from the Seraglio," K. 384**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
(1756-1791)

*Cristian Măcelaru, conductor*

**Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64**

Felix Mendelssohn  
(1809-1847)

*Allegro molto appassionato*

*Andante*

*Allegretto non troppo – Allegro molto vivace*

*Sergiu Luca, soloist*

## INTERMISSION

**Variaciones concertantes, Op. 23**

Alberto Ginastera  
(1916-1983)

*Tema per Violoncello ed Arpa*

*(Adagio molto espressivo)*

*Interludio per corde (L'istesso tempo)*

*Variazione giocosa per Flauto (Tempo giusto)*

*Variazione in modo di Scherzo per Clarinetto (Vivace)*

*Variazione drammatica per Viola (Largo)*

*Variazione canonica per Oboe e Fagotto (Adagio tranquillo)*

*Variazione ritmica per Tromba e Trombone (Allegro)*

*Variazione in modo di Moto perpetuo per Violino*

*(L'istesso tempo)*

*Variazione pastorale per Corno (Largamente espressivo)*

*Interludio per Fiati (Moderato)*

*Ripresa dal Tema per Contrabasso (Adagio molto espressivo)*

*Variazione finale in modo di Rondo per Orchestra*

*(Allegro molto)*

*The reverberative acoustics of Stude Concert Hall magnify the slightest sound made by the audience. Your care and courtesy will be appreciated. The taking of photographs and use of recording equipment are prohibited.*

# SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

## Violin I

Ying Fu,  
concertmaster  
Jiyeon Min  
SoJin Kim  
Tiantian Zhang  
Malorie Blake  
Eric Siu  
Regina Dyches

## Violin II

Tracy Wu,  
principal  
Alyssa Yank  
Lijia Phang  
Emil Ivanov  
Emily Jackson  
Brooke Bennett

## Viola

Joshua Kelly,  
principal  
Molly Gebrian  
Hillary Schoap  
Alicia Valoti  
Jules Sulpico  
Padua Cauty

## Cello

Jacob Fowler,  
principal  
SeHee Kim

## Cello (cont.)

Lachezar Kostov  
Caroline Nicolas  
Andrew Bradford

## Double Bass

Annabella Leslie,  
principal \*  
Katherine Munagian,  
principal †  
Paul Cannon  
Kevin Brown †

## Flute

Henrik Heide  
Izumi Miyahara  
Henry Williford

## Piccolo

Izumi Miyahara

## Oboe

Kristin Kall  
Erica Overmyer

## Clarinet

Erika Cikraji  
André Dyachenko  
Daniel Goldman

## Bassoon

Briana Lehman  
Thomas DeWitt  
Matthew McDonald

## Horn

Nicholas Hartman  
Matthew Muehl-Miller  
Alena Zidlicky

## Trumpet

Patrick Corvington  
Ryan Darke  
Alexander Fioto  
Roberto Lares

## Trombone

Benjamin Zilber

## Harp

Sadie Turner

## Percussion

Ethan Ahmad  
Robert Garza  
Aaron Guillory  
Rebecca Hook

## Orchestra Manager and Librarian

Kaaren Fleisher

## Assistant Production Manager

Mandy Billings  
Francis Schmidt

\* Ginastera only

† Mozart and  
Mendelssohn only

STRING SEATING CHANGES WITH EACH CONCERT.

WINDS AND BRASS LISTED ALPHABETICALLY.

## PROGRAM NOTES

**Overture to "The Abduction . . . . Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
from the Seraglio," K. 384**

In early 1781, twenty-five-year-old Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart found himself in the imperial city of Vienna, having just left his job in the service of the Archbishop of Salzburg. He took lodgings with a family that he had known for some time, whose daughter Constanze would soon become his wife. Hungry for commissions, he ingratiated himself with the Emperor Joseph II and the officials of the Emperor's pet project, the Nationalssingspiel. Within months, Mozart received a commission from the imperial



court for a *Singspiel*, a type of German-language opera that includes spoken dialogue instead of recitative. This work was to be Mozart's introduction to the Viennese public.

The director of the *Nationalsingspiel*, Gottlieb Stephanie, altered an earlier play by Christoph Bretzner to create the libretto. Mozart himself acknowledged that "as Stephanie's work is concerned... I am well aware that the verse is not of the best." He made do and created *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*), which premiered on July 16, 1782. It was an instant success. After the third performance, Mozart wrote to his father, "people are absolutely crazy about this opera. It does one good to hear such applause." Within five years of its Vienna premiere, *Die Entführung* had been performed in twenty-five other European cities.

The opera is a comedy, set in the exotic court of the Ottoman Empire. Many aspects of the opera serve to enforce Orientalist stereotypes of the Ottomans – the heroine is forced into the Pasha's harem, and the comically sinister overseer Osmin plays on stereotypes of Turkish cruelty. Mozart also incorporated parts of Janissary military music to underline the exotic flavor of the opera, but Westernized it to make it palatable to his audience. In the overture, this influence is especially noticeable in the incessant use of "Turkish" percussion instruments: triangle, cymbal, and bass drum. The overture is bombastic and exciting, subject to abrupt changes in mood. After a slow middle section in a minor key, the beginning *Allegro* returns and launches with vigor into the events of the first act.

### ***Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64* . . . . . Felix Mendelssohn**

Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64* (1844) is unquestionably one of the masterworks of the genre. As the influential violinist Joseph Joachim said in 1906:

*The Germans have four violin concertos. The greatest, the most uncompromising, is Beethoven's. The one by Brahms vies with it in seriousness. The richest, the most seductive, was written by Max Bruch. But the most inward, the heart's jewel, is Mendelssohn's.*

As well as a first-rate composition for the instrument, it is also an excellent illustration of Mendelssohn's mature style. Mendelssohn was a child prodigy in the truest sense of the word; many of his best-loved works were written before his eighteenth birthday. However, his output grew no less inspired as he grew older. This violin concerto is the last major orchestral composition he completed. It was premiered two years before his death in 1847, and yet it sounds as fresh and unique as any of his teenage masterpieces.

Despite the violin concerto's beauty, Mendelssohn often complained to friends about how difficult it was for him to find a balance between virtuosity and musical substance when writing concerti. Mendelssohn was wary of the flashy showpieces that many musicians were composing at the time to show off their talent. He was frequently known to criticize contemporary virtuosos such as Franz Liszt, Henri Herz, and even at times Frédéric Chopin. Mendelssohn wanted none of his compositions to be as empty as theirs. In his violin concerto, Mendelssohn clearly achieved the balance that he was after.

Because Mendelssohn had so many difficulties in writing the concerto, this piece had an unusually long gestation period of six years. Ever the perfectionist, he consulted frequently with a close friend and the work's dedicatee, violinist Ferdinand David, to ensure that the piece was written so



that it would showcase the violin's best qualities. He began brainstorming for the concerto in the summer of 1838, and the composition was completed in September of 1844. David premiered the work with Danish composer Niels Gade conducting the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra.

On July 30, 1838, Mendelssohn wrote to David, "I would like to write a violin concerto for you next winter; there's one in E minor in my head, and its opening won't leave me in peace." And indeed, the opening of this work is haunting and disquieting. The first movement begins with the violin singing the first theme softly over the orchestra. It quickly works itself into a forte statement for the orchestra. After a lengthy transitional passage, the second theme, serene and in the relative major, is heard in hushed pianissimo in the flute and clarinet, to be echoed and extended by the soloist. The major key is celebrated through further passagework until the development interrupts with a jarring diminished chord. Note the placement of the cadenza after this development section, not at the end of the entire movement as would be expected by Mendelssohn's contemporaries. A straightforward recapitulation propels us to the end of the movement, which ends suspensefully on a hanging B in the bassoon.

This B is resolved stepwise upward to a C, which becomes the tonic for the second movement, a lovely song without words in typical Mendelssohn fashion. A stormy middle section only serves to amplify the delicate beauty of the first section when it returns. A short transitional passage connects the second and third movements; yet another stroke of Mendelssohnian genius. The section, which sounds more like an operatic recitative than anything else, eases the contrast between the tranquil second movement and the sparkling merrymaking of the finale.

With a brass fanfare, the fun begins. The measures fly by as lighter-than-air violin writing flits through the clear harmonies outlined in the orchestra. Do not be deceived, however, as Mendelssohn does not let the flashiness of the violin part obscure several beautiful singing lines for the orchestra, especially toward the end of the movement in the strings. Finally, the violin draws the whole orchestra in for some exciting final flourishes.

Mendelssohn's **Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64**, is scored for solo violin, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

### **Variaciones concertantes, Op. 23 . . . . . Alberto Ginastera**

Argentine composer Alberto Ginastera is widely recognized as the man who, along with Heitor Villa-Lobos, helped make a place in art music for South American composers. Similar to Bartók's work with Hungarian folk music a generation earlier, Ginastera took inspiration and quotations from traditional Argentine music and combined it with his own ideas. His music successfully pairs the passionate (sometimes erotic) with classicizing elements. Although most of his music was decidedly tonal, Ginastera also explored bitonality (as in tonight's work) and later in his life, twelve-tone composition. Because of the racy nature of some of his music, Ginastera was disliked by Juan Perón and the government, and was pressured to move to America in 1945 after Perón was elected president. He remained there for two years, during which he studied with Aaron Copland and was exposed to the diverse spectrum of American music, all of which influenced him immensely. When he returned to Argentina, he gained repute as a composition teacher. Among his students was Ástor Piazzolla, the second great Argentinean com-



poser of the twentieth century. He continued to have rocky relations with the government, however, and in 1971 Ginastera moved to Geneva, where he lived for the rest of his life.

The *Variaciones concertantes*, Op. 23 (1953) has, according to the composer, "a subjective character. Instead of employing folkloric materials, an Argentine atmosphere is obtained by the use of original melodies and rhythms... whose expressive tension has a pronounced Argentine accent." Ginastera described it as "concerto-like," showcasing all the colors and textures that a chamber orchestra can achieve through both instrumental solos and ensemble playing. The piece is in 12 parts, all played continuously:

1. *Theme for Violoncello and Harp*. One can definitely hear a distinctive Argentine-ness to the theme in its modality and melancholy, as well as Copland's influence in the clarity and open quality of the harmonies. The harp plays arpeggios based on the tuning of a guitar (E-A-D-G-B-E) while the cello sings a plaintive melody.

2. *Interlude for Strings*. The first variation comes in gently, chromatically descending from violins to basses and then back up to encompass the rich sound of the complete string section.

3. *Humorous Variation for Flute*. An ornamentation of the theme in the solo flute is accompanied by rambunctious accompaniment, which passes throughout the orchestra.

4. *Variation in the Style of a Scherzo for Clarinet*. The rhythm of this variation is based on the malambo, a traditional Argentine cowboy (gaucho) dance.

5. *Dramatic Variation for Viola*. The solo viola, gently accompanied by the orchestra, explores the inherent pathos of the original theme in Ginastera's typically theatrical manner.

6. *Canonic Variation for Oboe and Bassoon*. A version of the theme is presented in canon over soft strings.

7. *Rhythmic Variation for Trumpet and Trombone*. The shortest variation, another malambo livens things up.

8. *Perpetual Motion Variation for Violin*. Another brief and rhythmically exciting variation, the solo violin line showcases the asymmetrical phrase structure of the theme.

9. *Pastoral Variation for Horn*. A stately horn solo soars over a cushion of strings, creating a much-needed respite after the last two variations.

10. *Interlude for Winds*. Evoking a more archaic composition, the theme is passed between instruments over bitonal harmonies.

11. *Reprise of the Theme for Double Bass*. In the bass' statement, the theme takes on a decidedly melancholy and nostalgic tone as we are reminded of the beginning of the piece.

12. *Final Variation in the Style of a Rondo for Orchestra*. Another malambo makes up the exciting climax of the work, which celebrates the entire ensemble as each instrument takes a figurative bow for the audience.

*Variaciones concertantes* was commissioned by the Association of Friends of Music of Buenos Aires and was premiered on June 2, 1953. It is scored for two flutes (one doubling piccolo), oboe, two clarinets, bassoon, two horns, trumpet, trombone, timpani, harp, and strings.

— Notes by Sophie Benn



RICE



## BIOGRAPHIES

*"A fiddler's fiddler" is how violinist SERGIU LUCA was described by a reviewer in The Washington Post. This is typical praise for a concert personality who has enjoyed a worldwide career. He combines an unparalleled diversity of repertoire with inspired virtuosity as a soloist with orchestras and in annual recitals at major music centers around the world. A native of Rumania, Mr. Luca made his debut with Israel's Haifa Symphony at the age of nine. Following his studies in England and Switzerland, he came to the United States to study with the legendary pedagogue Ivan Galamian at the Curtis Institute.*

*Soon after his debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1965, he was chosen by Leonard Bernstein to play the Sibelius Violin Concerto with the New York Philharmonic for a special CBS television network tribute to the Finnish composer. He has subsequently performed with many of the world's leading orchestras in Europe, Israel, Latin America, and the United States, including the Cleveland, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Houston, Baltimore, Atlanta, and National Symphony Orchestras and the Israel Philharmonic, New Philharmonia of London, and the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra. Sergiu Luca's many recordings attest to his sensitivity for varied styles and periods of music. He made a sensation with his recordings of the complete unaccompanied works of J.S. Bach, the first rendering on an original instrument. Subsequent recordings of music by Bartók, Schumann, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Tartini, Janáček, and William Bolcom, as well as orchestral recordings with Leonard Slatkin and the St. Louis Symphony and David Zinman and the Rochester Philharmonic, gained him international acclaim. As a recitalist, Sergiu Luca has performed in Europe, Mexico, Japan, and throughout North America.*

*He has collaborated with such keyboard artists as Emanuel Ax, Albert Fuller, Brian Connelly, Joseph Kalichstein, Peter Serkin, and Malcolm Bilson. He is the Dorothy Richard Starling Professor of Violin at The Shepherd School of Music.*

*Romanian violinist, composer, and conductor CRISTIAN MĂCELARU started studying music at the age of six in his native country. After winning top prizes in the National Music Olympiad of Romania (1994, 1996, 1997), Mr. Măcelaru attended the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan, where he furthered his studies in both violin and conducting. Upon his graduation, he moved to Miami, where he received a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Miami. While in Miami, Mr. Măcelaru was assistant conductor of the University of Miami Symphony Orchestra, associate conductor of the Florida Youth Orchestra, conductor and founder of the Clarke Chamber Players, and concertmaster of the Miami Symphony Orchestra. He has performed recitals throughout the United States, Europe, and China, as well as with orchestras such as the Houston Symphony Orchestra, the Miami Symphony Orchestra, the Naples Philharmonic, and the Banatul Philharmonic.*

*Mr. Măcelaru received the Master of Music degree in violin performance from The Shepherd School of Music under the guidance of Sergiu Luca and completed a Master of Music degree in conducting with Larry Rachleff. He is currently Staff Conductor at the Shepherd School, a conductor with the Houston Youth Symphony, and the founder and artistic director of the Crisalis Music Project. Visit [www.CrisalisMusicProject.org](http://www.CrisalisMusicProject.org).*

## UPCOMING ORCHESTRA CONCERTS

Friday, Dec. 4, 8:00 p.m. – SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Berlioz - **Royal Hunt and Storm**  
from **Les Troyens**; Aaron Alon - **Everest** (2009; Premiere) (Cristian Măcelaru,  
conductor); and Dvořák - **Symphony No. 6 in D Major, Op. 60**.  
Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.

Friday, Feb. 12, 8:00 p.m. – SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Sibelius - **Night Ride and Sunrise,**  
**Op. 55**; Mozart - **Piano Concerto No. 20 in D Minor, K. 466** (Jeewon Lee,  
soloist; Cristian Măcelaru, conductor); Rachmaninoff - **Isle of the Dead,**  
**Op. 29**; R. Strauss - **Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28**.  
Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.

Saturday, Feb. 13, 8:00 p.m. – SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA  
Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Handel - **Suite from "Water Music"**;  
Haydn - **Symphony No. 96 in D Major, "Miracle"**; Ethan Greene - **A Mouth-**  
**ful of Gravel** (2009; Premiere) (Cristian Măcelaru, conductor); and Lalo  
Schiffrin - **Tangos Concertantes** (Cho-Liang Lin, violin).  
Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.